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Letter dated 12 January 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement on the killing of Archbishop Michael Courtney in Burundi, issued on 8 January 2004 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Richard **Ryan**
Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 12 January 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the killing of Archbishop Michael Courtney in Burundi issued on 8 January 2004 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

The European Union condemns firmly the death of the Apostolic Nuncio in Burundi, Archbishop Michael Courtney, brutally murdered during a road ambush in Minago, and expresses its deep sympathy to his family and the Holy See.

The European Union pays homage to the figure of Archbishop Michael Courtney, whose commitment to alleviating the enormous suffering of the local population and to stopping the violence was highly appreciated by the Burundian people and the international community.

The European Union urges the Government of Burundi to clarify the circumstances under which the assassination occurred and expects that the perpetrators of this crime will be brought to justice. The European Union hopes that this heinous shooting does not jeopardize the implementation of the peace process.

The European Union calls upon the National Liberation Forces movement to abandon the military option, which aggravates the enormous suffering already visited upon the population.

The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey and the EFTA countries, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.